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By: **Senators Jones, Conway, Currie, Exum, Forehand, Giannetti, Gladden,  
Hughes, Kelley, and McFadden**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2004

Assigned to: Finance

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Service Companies - Customer Accounts**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a public service company to obtain certain identification  
4 from an individual seeking to open or alter a certain account or an individual  
5 requesting information about a certain account; prohibiting an individual from  
6 opening an account with a public service company in another individual's name  
7 under certain circumstances; providing that a public service company that  
8 violates a certain provision is liable for certain charges under certain  
9 circumstances; and generally relating to access to or opening a customer's  
10 account with a public service company.

11 BY adding to

12 Article - Public Utility Companies

13 Section 5-305

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (1998 Volume and 2003 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
17 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article - Public Utility Companies**

19 5-305.

20 (A) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT OPEN AN ACCOUNT WITH A PUBLIC SERVICE  
21 COMPANY WITHOUT FIRST PRODUCING IDENTIFICATION IN THE FORM OF A SOCIAL  
22 SECURITY NUMBER OR DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER.

23 (B) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT OPEN AN ACCOUNT WITH A PUBLIC SERVICE  
24 COMPANY IN ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL'S NAME UNLESS:

25 (1) THE INDIVIDUAL HAS OBTAINED AND PRODUCED TO THE PUBLIC  
26 SERVICE COMPANY WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FROM THE INDIVIDUAL NAMED ON  
27 THE ACCOUNT; OR

1           (2)     THE INDIVIDUAL SEEKING TO OPEN THE ACCOUNT IS ALSO NAMED  
2 ON THE ACCOUNT.

3     (C)     BEFORE AN INDIVIDUAL MAY MAKE CHANGES TO AN EXISTING  
4 CUSTOMER ACCOUNT WITH A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OR RECEIVE INFORMATION  
5 ABOUT AN EXISTING CUSTOMER ACCOUNT, THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY SHALL  
6 REQUIRE THE INDIVIDUAL TO PRODUCE IDENTIFICATION IN THE FORM OF A  
7 PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER, SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, DRIVER'S  
8 LICENSE NUMBER, OR PASSWORD.

9     (D)     IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER REMEDIES PROVIDED BY LAW, IF A PUBLIC  
10 SERVICE COMPANY FAILS TO OBTAIN IDENTIFICATION FROM AN INDIVIDUAL IN  
11 VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION, THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY SHALL BE  
12 RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CHARGES TO AN ACCOUNT THAT ARE INCURRED AS A  
13 RESULT OF THE CREATION OF AN UNAUTHORIZED ACCOUNT OR OF AN  
14 UNAUTHORIZED CHANGE.

15     SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
16 October 1, 2004.